

# WE MUST CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE AGAINST FORGETTING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I stand in strong support of the Special Order commemorating the Armenian genocide; and I commend my colleagues, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG), for putting this Special Order together and for keeping the issue of the Armenian genocide at the forefront here in Congress.

The tragic occurrence perpetrated against the Armenian people between 1915 and 1925 by the Ottoman Turkish Empire is of great concern to me and members of my constituency. During this relatively brief time frame, over 1.5 million Armenians were massacred and more than 5,000 were exiled. Unfortunately, the Turkish Government has not recognized these brutal atrocities as acts of genocide. Nor is it willing to come to terms with these horrific events of the past that many of their ancestors participated in.

Prior to the Armenian genocide, these brave people with a history of over 2,500 years in the region were subject to numerous indignities and periodic massacres by the sultans of the Ottoman Empire. The worst of these massacres prior to 1915 occurred in 1895 when as many as 300,000 Armenian civilians were murdered, and those who survived were left completely destitute.

Despite these events, Armenians have survived as a people and a culture throughout Europe and now throughout the United States. The Turkish Government needs to come to terms with the past and work towards improving the future. Turkish groups have suggested that since Turks were also killed during that time frame it should not be considered a genocide.

Genocide is the systematic, planned annihilation of a racial, political, or cultural group. It happened to the Jews in Germany, and it did happen to the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.

I am well aware of the importance of Turkey as an ally in an unstable region and a frontline NATO state. However, the Turkish Government must officially recognize the atrocities of its predecessors in the Ottoman Empire. I believe that by failing to recognize such barbaric acts one becomes complicit in them.

Milan Kundera, the once-exiled Czech novelist, has written, "The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting."

I believe that we, too, must continue to struggle against forgetting. This Special Order begins that process. This genocide and its lessons must never be forgotten.

# APRIL 24, 1915, ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FERGUSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FERGUSON. Madam Speaker, I join my colleagues today to remember a horrific atrocity in history, the Armenian genocide. April 24 is recognized as the anniversary date of this genocide, when Armenian intellectuals and professionals in Constantinople were rounded up and deported or killed.

From 1915 to 1923, a million and a half Armenians were killed and countless others suffered as a result of the systematic and deliberate campaign of genocide by the rulers of the Ottoman Empire.

Half a million Armenians who escaped death were deported to the Middle East. Some were fortunate enough to escape to the United States.

Madam Speaker, I am thankful that more than a million Armenians managed to escape the genocide and establish a new life here in the United States. In my Seventh District in New Jersey, I am proud to represent a number of Armenian-Americans. They have enriched every aspect of New Jersey life, from science to commerce to the arts.

Our statements today are intended to preserve the memory of the Armenian loss and to honor those descendants who have overcome the atrocities that took their grandparents, their parents, their children, and their friends. We mark this anniversary each year to remind our Nation and to teach future generations about the horrors of genocide and oppression endured by the Armenian people.

We must commit ourselves to ensuring that America remains a beacon of tolerance and openness and diversity.

Madam Speaker, I commend the commitment of Armenian-Americans who continue to strive for world recognition of one of the greatest atrocities of the 20th century.

## EARTH DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, as one who came to Congress committed to having the Federal Government be a better partner in making our communities more livable, making our families safe, healthy and economically secure, this last weekend in the celebration of Earth Day was a special time.

Every April 22, around the world, there is recognition of the Earth Day celebrations. This was an undertaking that was founded in 1970 by then U.S.

Senator Gaylord Nelson, who proposed a nationwide environmental protest to, quote, shake up the political establishment and force this issue onto the national agenda.

Well, Senator Nelson succeeded, I think, even beyond his expectations, as he was able to encourage this recognition internationally. I think it was appropriate that he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his role as the founder of Earth Day.

This year, as we reviewed the news accounts, there was a great deal of energy, excitement and indeed some good news for the environment around the world. Part of it was the environmental activism itself. There were over 800 rallies held across the United States, and internationally there were more than 100. In honor of Earth Day, the Wilderness Society named the White House as an object of their future concerns about national parks and monuments.

There was in Washington, D.C. a forum on solar energy held to celebrate the advances made in the technology, economics and prospects for the use of solar energy. There was a massive Trees Are My Friends campaign that helped to educate urban residents about the value of street trees in the urban forest canopy, helping residents connect with tree care and planning activities in their community.

This last weekend, I joined with people in my community in Portland, Oregon, to celebrate a successful tree-planting undertaking. They have successfully planted now 207,000 trees. During the month of April, citizens in a variety of cities in the West, including Portland, Seattle and Denver, were engaged in races and walks to raise the awareness of climate change, to help stop global climate warming.

□ 2015

There were rallies in India by cycling organizations to push for the creation of no vehicle zones in major cities. Additionally, there were events to protest deforestation in Mexico, children rallying for the protection of endangered species in Estonia and Russia; and there were tree plantings in Burmese refugee camps in Thailand.

There was good news on the State level. One in particular that caught my attention was in the State of California where the Department of Fish and Game has issued draft regulations to protect sea otters and other marine mammals from deadly gill nets. These regulations are going to make a huge difference in the protection of marine mammals.

In Massachusetts, that State will become the first on a State level to limit carbon dioxide emissions from power plants under their own clean air rules. The new standard, which will go into effect in June, will also limit mercury emissions, acid rain causing sulfur dioxide, and smog-causing nitrogen